

**TO: ENVIRONMENT, CULTURE & COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL  
18 MARCH 2014**

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**INTEGRATED TRANSPORT CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2013/14  
Director of Environment, Culture and Communities**

**1 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To provide an overview of the work being undertaken within the 2013/14 Integrated Transport Capital Programme.

**2 RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 **That the Environment, Culture and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel notes the report.**

**3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 To inform the Panel of Integrated Transport work being undertaken.

**4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 4.1 Not applicable.

**5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

**Background**

- 5.1 In March 2011 the Council adopted a new long term transport strategy, the Local Transport Plan 3 (LTP3), which sets out the key challenges facing Bracknell Forest through the period 2011-2026. The plan outlines the Council's transport objectives and how these will be delivered. To support delivery, an associated Implementation Plan sets out priorities and plans over a rolling three year period which is updated annually and addresses developing needs.
- 5.2 Schemes, plans or combinations of both are assessed against the objectives of:
- National Transport Goals;
  - Local Transport Plan Objectives;
  - Sustainable Community Strategy.
- 5.3 Historically, funding for the programme has been made up of an Integrated Transport Grant from Central Government, alongside developer contributions (S106) for transport mitigation measures. However, in 2013, additional Borough capital funding of £6.5m was allocated to the 3 year period 2013-16 for various town centre highway works, including capacity improvements such as the Twin Bridges roundabout and the A329 London Road-Martins Heron junction. In addition to grant and S106 funds, in 2013/14 the Council was successful in securing contributions from Central Government through the Local Pinch Point Programme and Local Sustainable

Transport Fund. These latter funding elements are aimed at implementing transport measures linked to economic growth and carbon reduction with a focus on the regenerating town centre.

- 5.4 **Annex A** shows the Integrated Transport Capital Programme for 2013/14 which includes schemes aimed at unlocking town centre regeneration and supporting further economic growth. These schemes align with the broader transport policies and objectives within the LTP3.

### **Progress to Date**

- 5.5 Approval of the 2013/14 programme has allowed the Council to continue to implement Highway Capacity Improvements along its strategic road corridors. Following on from the improvements at the Sports Centre and the Horse and Groom roundabouts, work has started on the Twin Bridges junction. This is the Borough's busiest junction and intersects the A329, A322 and A3095 corridors with high levels of traffic merging upon the area throughout the day.
- 5.6 Various layouts have been examined previously, including an extensive "fly through" option, but whilst all delivered some improvement the cost/benefit ratio varied considerably. A proportionate, but effective, approach has now been adopted which combines improvements to the management of the corridor through greater use of Urban Traffic Management & Control (UTMC) technology alongside more localised improvements to increase the physical scale of the junction. Once complete (Summer 2014), the junction will be fully signalised and the benefits of such control, alongside the increased capacity, will assist across the local region. It is this overall approach that will provide more reliable journey times along the corridor whilst demonstrating greater value for money (i.e. less physical change and more efficient use of the existing infrastructure).
- 5.7 In recognition of the importance and benefits that the improvements would bring, the Department for Transport awarded Bracknell Forest a grant of £1m towards the cost of these works through its Local Pinch Point Fund initiative. This follows other successful bids by the Highways Agency for National Pinch Point Funding for Junction 10 of the M4 and the successful Local Pinch Point bid by Wokingham Borough Council for the Coppid Beech junction improvements. Both these schemes form part of the A322/A329 corridor between M3 and M4.
- 5.8 In 2013/14 the Council has also continued to push forward and expand its broader UTMC capabilities that will allow the monitoring and management of key junctions along the Borough's key strategic corridors. This work is vital to maximise the effectiveness of current and future improvements. The associated control systems will be used to maximise the performance of the strategic road network as a whole, including its response to fluctuating demands. Such control will be crucial in the context of a regenerated town centre.
- 5.9 The combined approach of physical change and the application of technology are also planned for the B3408 and proposals for the Shoulder of Mutton junction (yet to be implemented) also feature within the current programme. By improving capacity at this junction, and linking its operation to the traffic signals at John Nike Way and subsequently an improved Coppid Beech roundabout, a co-ordinated network can be achieved. This will result in reduced traffic stop-time and more progression through this section of the London Road. Such a co-ordinated approach is important in helping develop a robust transport system that not only supports local needs and the local economy but also provides wider benefit to the region.

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- 5.10 In addition to implementing these strategic transport projects the Transport Development Section have been busy investigating and developing further schemes that will be required to accommodate growth predicted for the Borough in the coming years. This important work will enable the Council to acquire additional funds, not only from developers but also from Central Government funding streams that are managed by the Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEP). Work so far has put forward schemes to the LEP including further improvements to the A322 and A329 corridors that could give the Authority additional funding from 2015 onwards.
- 5.11 As well as highway capacity schemes aimed at unlocking economic growth and town centre regeneration, in 2013/14 the Council have continued to implement local improvements that support the Local Transport Plan and Community Strategy. These focus on improving the travel choice and improving the quality of life for residents through a safer and healthier environment.
- 5.12 Accessibility has been improved across the Borough providing residents with better and safer access to a range of services. For example, the provision of a new footpath adjacent to the Stag & Hounds PH forming an important link from Binfield village centre to both the PH and Wyevale Garden Centre (as requested by Binfield Parish Council and local residents). In addition, the scheme provides improvements to the junction of Forest Road and Tilehurst Lane which have aided vehicle turning movements and improved safety.
- 5.13 Safer crossing facilities are also being installed in locations such as the B3408 Wokingham Road and Wildridings Road providing residents with safer access to local facilities including fresh food and healthcare and which also improve access to public transport.
- 5.14 The 2013/14 Safer Modes of Travel to School programme has continued to provide access improvements for Ascot Heath, Binfield, Brakenhale, Easthampstead Park and St Margaret Clitherow schools, with all benefiting from measures. These include new footways, street lighting, improved crossing facilities, 'park and stride' and drop-off facilities alongside targeted parking restrictions to improve safety in the immediate vicinity of the schools and reduce possible conflict with motor vehicles.
- 5.15 The Traffic Management programme has included Speed Management Schemes on Waterloo Road (Crowthorne) and the B3034 Warfield Road resulting from the Council's recent 'locally important road' speed assessment exercise. In addition, there have been Local Safety Schemes programmed for the A332 Windsor Road and Crowthorne Road to address patterns of accidents that have been identified through analysis. Works include measures to reinforce the speed limit, new traffic islands to encourage reduced vehicle speeds, and enhanced road markings to ensure the correct approach into oncoming junctions.
- 5.16 Work has continued on implementing measures included with the Local Sustainable Transport Fund which is Department for Transport initiative that has provided the Authority with an additional £1.6m over three years to promote sustainable modes of travel alongside initiatives aimed at reducing traffic congestion and improving journey times. Work so far has included a dedicated 'Bike It' officer (seconded from the transport charity 'Sustrans') who has been working with 16 schools, so far, to encourage more cycling to school. Business engagement teams have been delivering sustainable transport roadshows and eco-driving training to key local businesses, as well as setting up a car share schemes and co-ordinating negotiations for a shared shuttle buses. Personal travel planning teams have delivered travel

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information and advice to 1300 residents which has resulted in a significant increase in journeys to work on foot and by cycle, and the Council's partnership with British Cycling and Sky has so far resulted in 20 led promotional cycle rides around the Borough.

- 5.17 All of these measures go some way to help the Council achieve its Local Transport Plan vision to develop a sustainable transport system that supports local economy, provides choice and improves quality of life within a safer and healthier environment. Progress is monitored through the annual Travel in Bracknell report which shows there has been an increase in use of rail services and greater number of pedestrians and cyclists against the back-drop of a slight reduction in traffic over the last 10 years. However, with planned housing and economic growth current traffic levels are set to rise significantly over the coming years.

## **6 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS / EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT / STRATEGIC RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES / CONSULTATION**

- 6.1 Not applicable.

### Background Papers

None

### Contact for further information

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